

REMARKS

Claims 3, 4 and 7 through 11 are now in this application. Claims 1-3, 5 and 6 are rejected. Claims 4 and 7 are objected to. Claims 1, 2, 5 and 6 are cancelled. Claims 3, 4 and 7 are amended herein to clarify the subject matter of the invention. New claims 8-11 are added.

Applicants herein traverse and respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of the claims and objection cited in the above-referenced Office Action.

The specification is amended to correct various typographical, grammatical and idiomatic informalities. No new matter is added.

The abstract is objected to on the basis that it includes the phrase "present invention. A replacement abstract is provided herein on a separate page. It is submitted that the replacement abstract is in full conformance with 37 CFR 1.72 and MPEP 608.01(b). Therefore, reconsideration of the objection to the abstract is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 5 and 6 are rejected as obvious over HALand in view of Buchner under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). The applicants herein respectfully traverse this rejection. For a rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) to be sustained, the differences

between the features of the combined references and the present invention must be obvious to one skilled in the art.

Claims 1, 2, 5 and 6 are now cancelled rendering their rejections moot and claim 3 is made dependent from newly added claims 8 or 9. However, insofar as the subject matter of new claims 8-11 reflects that of the cancelled claims and in the event the Examiner considers applying the present rejection to the new claims or making the next Office Action final, applicants submit the following remarks.

According to new claim 8, a side air bag has a bag portion formed by connecting two woven fabric panels along a outer peripheral portion and has a mechanism for expanding the bag portion alongside a window of a vehicle. A connecting portion for connecting the two woven fabric panels is formed by weaving a textile structure using yarn from both fabrics. A part of the connecting portion is made non-continuous to form an opening for introducing an inflator gas, which opening is defined by the connecting portion and the two woven fabrics. That is, the connecting portion for connecting an outer peripheral portion of the two woven fabric panels constituting the air bag, which connecting portion is formed by a textile structure having a common yarn constituting the two fabrics, forms an opening for introducing an inflator gas.

The claimed construction allows the opening to be formed simultaneously with weaving of the two woven fabrics without requiring sewing and cutting.

Further, even though the opening is formed by connecting two woven fabrics, the connecting portion defining the opening has sufficient connection strength and is not damaged easily.

According to new claim 9, the opening is extended to form a cylindrical duct. Thereby, as shown in the drawings, the inflator (10) can be easily connected by inserting a part thereof into the opening portion (9).

In contrast, HAland (USP 5,788,270) shows a side impact safety device having a bag portion (20) constituted by weaving two fabrics, a duct (23) for introducing a gas of an inflator (22) connected to a portion designated as (24), which is not the connecting portion but "an inflatable part".

On the other hand, Buchner (USP 3,792,873) discloses that two fabrics are connected by a common textile structure, but does not disclose the feature that the opening for introducing a gas of the inflator into the air bag is formed by making a part of the connecting portion in the outer periphery of the bag portion non-continuous as mentioned above. It is respectfully submitted that the teachings provided by the cited references fail to provide a sufficient basis for rendering the claimed feature, noted above, obvious.

Further, in HAland, while the duct (23) for introducing gas is connected to the inflatable part (24) and links the inflator (22) to the inflatable part (24), the duct (23) is not a cylindrical duct formed by extending a part of the connecting

portion as recited in claim 9. Buchner similarly fails to disclose this feature. Therefore, the subject matter recited in new claims 8 and 9 cannot be arrived at by merely applying the connection structure of Buchner to HA1and. Thus, the above feature is not obvious in the art of manufacturing air bags.

According to new claim 10, in a side air bag of claim 8 or claim 9, the opening is located at a front end part of the two woven fabrics of the bag portion. Thereby, the inflator (10) can be provided in a bottom part of the front pillar and can be easily connected by inserting a part thereof into the opening or the cylindrical duct. No such teaching is disclosed in either of HA1and and Buchner.

According to new claim 11, in a side air bag of claim 8 or claim 9, the two woven fabrics or the textile structure having a common yarn constituting both fabric is extended outwardly from the connecting portion to form a mounting portion for mounting to a side structure of the vehicle. Such a feature is not found in the cited references.

According to claim 3, in a side air bag of claim 8 or claim 9, a linear connecting portion for partitioning in a substantially horizontal direction and in parallel with a flow direction of an inflator gas is formed by connecting two woven fabrics of the bag portion, at a center region of the bag portion. The connecting portion for partitioning is formed by weaving as textile structure having a common yarn of both fabrics. The linear connecting portion for partitioning in a

substantially horizontal direction and in parallel with a flow direction of an inflator gas provides instantaneously a preferable expanded shape. For example, the inflator gas introduced into the bag portion easily flows along the above-mentioned linear connecting portion for partitioning, so that a whole region of the bag portion instantaneously assumes a predetermined expanded shape. Moreover, in this expanded shape, since the respective portions partitioned by the above-mentioned connecting portion extend in a substantially horizontal direction and in parallel, even when a position of passenger's head is shifted back and forth during a collision, the partitioned portions of expanded air bag are disposed alongside the passenger's head, so that the passenger's head is well protected.

Contrary to this, HA1and, discloses a partitioning structure extending in a substantially vertical direction. Further, in Buchner the partitions have a loop shape enclosing the inner central chamber (12). Nothing is disclosed suggesting that the connecting portion for partitioning be made substantially horizontal and approximately parallel with a flow direction of an inflator gas.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the rejected claim 3 is not obvious in view of the cited references for the reasons stated above. Reconsideration of the rejection of the claim 3 and its allowance are respectfully requested.

Claims 4 and 7 are objected to as being dependent from rejected base claims. The Examiner indicates that the claims contain allowable subject matter

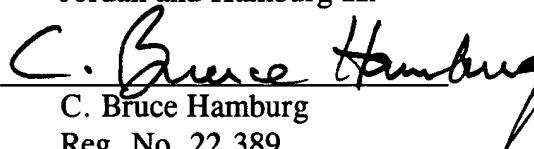
and would be allowed if put in independent form incorporating the limitations of the base and intervening claims. The claims are amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion and to clarify the subject matter of the invention. Reconsideration of the objection and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested.

In light of the foregoing, the application is now believed to be in proper form for allowance of all claims and notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 10-1250.

Respectfully submitted,

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